

By the Queene.

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*A proclamation to repressse all piracies and depredations vpon the Seas.*



INASMUCH as it is come to the Queenes Maiesties vnderstandyng, by meanes of certayne complayntes, as well by her owne subiectes as others, that there are sundry persons vpon the narrow Seas, of diuers nations, and some borne within her Maiesties dominions, hauing shippes armed in warlike maner, who partly at the first went manifestly to the Seas in maner of marchauntes, & haue afterwarde by sinister meanes chaunged their trade, and armed them selues for the warre: some others haue secretly stolen out of obscure places, with a pretence in these troublesome tymes, that are seene as well eastwarde betwixt the kingdome of Denmarke & Sweden, and their adherentes, as westwarde in the dominions of Fraunce, both lamentable to beholde, to serue on the Seas either on the one part or the other, and yet in deede haue at length directed them selues from all lefull seruice of warres, to lyue as pirates, robbing and spoyling al maner of honest marchauntes of euery nation without difference, whom they are able to subdue. For remedy wherof, although her Maiestie hath of late tyme geuen certayne strypte orders through all her portes, that no maner of persons, other then known marchauntes, shoulde be suffered to sell or distribute any maner of wares or marchaundises in any her portes, nor that any within her Realme should bittayle, or otherwise relieue any maner of person any wise to be suspected of piracie. Yet now vpon these newe complayntes, her Maiestie findyng that therby hath folowed no such ful remedy as was looked for: for that purpose her Maiestie hath thought meete to deuise & publishe by her proclamation some further effectual remedy. And therfore doth stryptly charge & comaunde al maner her subiectes, to forbear from abyding or receauyng of any pirate, or any person hauing not lefull auctoritie from her Maiestie, or not being a known marchaunt by contractyng, bying, sellyng, or exchaungyng, or by bittayling of them or any of their companie, whereby they or any of them shalbe the more enabled to returne to the Seas to commit any piracie or disorder, vpon payne for so doyng to be punished presently, as the principall offendours and pirates ought to be. And furthermore, whosoever shall hereafter arme or prepare any vessel to the sea, except it be such as shall by her Maiesties auctoritie be specially appoynted to kepe the Seas, as her Maiestie nowe is occasioned to do for some other respectes, or such as shall haue expresse licence and permission by her Maiestie: the same shall geue knowledge to the officers of the portes of their whole furniture, who shal duely searche and visite the same, to the intent to slay such persons as apparauntly shalbe so furnished for the warres, and not for marchaundise or fishyng. And if there shalbe any maner of suspicion, that the sayde person though he shall pretende to trade for marchaundise or fishyng, hath or may haue any intent by his prouisions or furniture, otherwise then to vse the trade of marchandise, or fishyng: that in such case of suspicion, the officers of the portes shall slay, and no wise suffer the same to passe to the Seas, without good bandes by sufficient suerties first had, to vse nothyng but a lefull trade of marchaundise or fishyng. And if the officers shall suffer any person otherwise to repaire to the Seas then aboue is mentioned, they shall not only answer for any piracies which any such person shall chaunce thereafter to do vpon the Sea: but shall suffer imprisonment vntill the offendours may be apprehended, if they shalbe lyuyng. And generally her Maiestie declareth and denounceth all such pirates and rousers vpon the Seas to be out of her protection, and lefully to be by any person taken, punished, and suppressed with extremite.

Geuen at her Maiesties Pallace of Westmynster, the. xxvii. day of April, the. xi. yere of her Maiesties most noble raigne.

God saue the Queene.

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*Cum priuilegio Regie Maiestatis.*